

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently amended) Device for taking liquid or gaseous samples from first containers and/or tubes that are filled with a medium, ~~in particular from fermenters, by means of negative pressure, wherein an element which acts as a non-return valve~~ element is arranged within a sample probe as an inlet for ~~the~~ a sample that is to be taken, ~~characterized in that~~ which element is opened by means of negative pressure, wherein a supply line ~~(6)~~ which is able to convey gas and a discharge line which is able to discharge sample are arranged on the side of the element that is remote from the medium arranged in ~~the~~ a first container.
2. (Previously presented) Device according to Claim 1, characterized in that the supply line which is able to convey gas and the discharge line which is able to discharge sample are in each case connected to a second container which receives the sample.
3. (Currently Amended) Device according to Claim 1, characterized in that the element -is arranged within a line ~~arrangement~~ between the supply and discharge lines.
4. (Currently Amended) Device according to Claim 1, characterized in that the supply line which is able to convey gas and the discharge line are ~~designed in such a way that they are~~

suitable for supplying and discharging gases at positive pressure to and from the non-return valve element ~~which acts as a non-return valve~~.

5. (Currently Amended) Device according to Claim 4, characterized in that the non-return valve element ~~which acts as a non-return valve~~ is designed in such a way that it the element can be closed automatically by means of the supply of gas at positive pressure.

6. (Previously presented) Device according to Claim 1, characterized in that the discharge line is connected to a device for generating the negative pressure.

7. (Previously presented) Device according to Claim 1, characterized in that the supply line and the discharge line are arranged within the first container and at least partially have a sheathing for temperature control and/or cooling of the supply line and the discharge line.

8. (Previously presented) Device according to Claim 7, further comprising a heating device for temperature control or a cooling device for cooling of the supply line and of the discharge line inside the sheathing.

9. (Previously presented) Device according to Claim 1, characterized in that the supply line which is able to convey gas is connected to a first gas-conveying connecting line for joining the supply line to a gas supply connection.

10. (Previously presented) Device according to Claim 9, further comprising a first and second valve arranged in the region of the first and second end of the gas-conveying connecting line.
11. (Previously presented) Device according to Claim 9 further comprising a pressure sensor in the gas-conveying connecting line.
12. (Previously presented) Device according to Claim 9 further comprising a first sterile filter is arranged in the gas-conveying connecting line.
13. (Currently Amended) Device according to Claim 9, characterized in that the supply and discharge lines are ~~designed in such a way that they are~~ suitable for supplying and discharging rinsing fluids to and from the element.
14. (Previously presented) Device according to Claim 13, characterized in that the supply line can be connected to a second connecting line which conveys rinsing fluid.
15. (Previously presented) Device according to Claim 14, characterized in that the second connecting line which conveys rinsing fluid is connected to a third container which contains a rinsing fluid.

16. (Currently Amended) Device according to Claim 13, characterized in that, for the purposes of pressure equalization, ~~the~~ a third container is connected to a further gas supply connection via a further gas-conveying connecting line with a further sterile filter arranged therein.

17. (Currently Amended) Device according to Claim 13, characterized in that ~~the~~ a third container is additionally connected to a rinsing fluid supply connection via a further connecting line which conveys rinsing fluid with a further sterile filter arranged therein.

18. (Currently Amended) Method for taking liquid or gaseous samples from containers and/or tubes that are filled with a medium, ~~in particular from fermenters, by means of negative pressure,~~ wherein ~~an element which acts as a non-return valve~~ element is arranged within a sample probe as an inlet for ~~the~~ a sample that is to be taken, which element is opened by means of negative pressure, characterized by the following steps:

- supplying a gas to the ~~element which acts as a non-return valve~~ element on the side of the element that is remote from the medium arranged in the container, by means of a supply line that can be shut off from other lines,
- discharging the gas from the ~~element which acts as a non-return valve~~ element by means of a discharge line and opening a device which is arranged in the discharge line and which acts as a shut-off valve, until the supply and discharge lines are free of a sample,

- closing at least one valve in order to disconnect the supply line from a gas supply connection,
- generating in the discharge line a negative pressure with respect to the pressure that exists in the container,
- automatically opening the element by means of the negative pressure that has been generated and conveying a sample that is to be taken from the container into the discharge line,
- supplying a gas which is again supplied at positive pressure with respect to the pressure that exists in the container,
- automatically closing the element by means of the positive pressure that has been generated, and
- conveying ~~the~~ a sample out of the discharge line by means of the gas which has again been supplied at positive pressure.

19. (Currently Amended) Method according to Claim 18, characterized in that, in order to prevent any blockages and adhesions within the discharge line that are caused by ingredients of ~~the~~ a sample, a rinsing fluid is supplied via the supply line and discharged via the discharge line after the step of conveying the sample out of the discharge line.

20. (Previously presented) Method according to Claim 19, characterized in that, after the step of supplying and discharging the rinsing fluid, the steps of supplying and discharging the gas are repeated.